

REMARKS

The drawings stand objected to under 37 CFR 1.83(a), because they do not show the “*actuating shaft comprising at least two outward-directed guide pins and each of the sleeves having an internal groove*”, as was recited in claim 7 (now recited in the currently amended claim 9).

To address the objection to the drawings, applicant submits the attached set of replacement drawings consisting of a new drawing sheet 6/6 with a new Figure 6 showing the aforementioned features of an actuating shaft with two outward-directed guide pins and sleeves with internal grooves. With the addition of a new, sixth drawing sheet 6/6 the existing five drawing sheets had to be renumbered 1/6 to 5/6.

Further in response to the objections to the drawings, applicant has made appropriate amendments to the specification, adding references to Figure 6 where required.

Claims 3-6, 9 and 10 are currently pending in the application, claims 1,2, 7 and 8 having been canceled without prejudice by the present amendment. Claims 3 and 9 have been rewritten in independent form in the present amendment, which necessitated changing the dependencies of claims 4 and 9.

Claim 3 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Takei, US Patent 5,540,113. While confirming that Takei does not disclose two reduction gear mechanisms, each being interposed between one of the two sleeves and one of the two motors (as required by claim 3), the Examiner nevertheless finds that “It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify Takei by replacing the pulley mechanisms with gear reduction mechanisms in order to transmit a higher load capacity”.

Applicant respectfully disagrees with the Examiner's finding of obviousness. A gear reduction mechanism such as, e.g., a worm gear mechanism is preferable to a pulley mechanism particularly in cases where the mechanism needs to fit into a compact space and the motors are not arranged coaxially with the driven shaft. The desirability of a compact arrangement is specifically emphasized in the specification paragraph "Object of the Invention". In Applicant's considered opinion, the fact that Takey does not mention a gear reduction mechanism in spite of its advantages over a pulley mechanism clearly demonstrates that the use of a gear mechanism cannot be called obvious. Applicant therefore respectfully requests the Examiner to withdraw the rejection of claim 3 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Takei, US Patent 5,540,113. Furthermore, as there are no other rejections concerning claim 3, applicant respectfully submits that claim 3 be allowed, and that its dependent claims 4-6 be allowed by virtue of their dependency on claim 3.

Claim 9 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Takei, US Patent 5,540,113 in view of Black, US Patent 5,704,250. While neither Takei nor Black discloses two reduction gear mechanisms, each being interposed between one of the two sleeves and one of the two motors (as required by claim 9), the Examiner nevertheless finds that “It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify Takei in view of Black by replacing the pulley mechanisms with gear reduction mechanisms in order to transmit a higher load capacity”.

Applicant again respectfully disagrees with the Examiner's finding of obviousness, based on the same reasoning as presented above in regard to the rejection of claim 3. In Applicant's considered opinion, the fact that neither Takey nor Bick mentions a gear reduction mechanism in spite of its advantages over a pulley mechanism clearly demonstrates that the use of a gear mechanism cannot be called obvious. Applicant therefore respectfully requests the Examiner to withdraw the rejection of claim 9 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Takei in view of Black. Furthermore, as there are no other rejections concerning claim 9, applicant

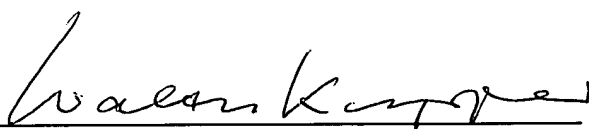
respectfully submits that claim 9 be allowed, and that its dependent claim 10 be allowed by virtue of its dependency on claim 9.

Applicant respectfully submits that all issues of the Office Action of June 29, 2004 have been appropriately addressed by the foregoing amendment and remarks. Allowance of the present application with claims 3-6, 9 and 10 is hereby earnestly solicited.

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Respectfully submitted,

DARBY & DARBY P.C.
P.O. Box 5257
New York, New York 10150-5257
(212) 527-7700
(212) 753-6237 (Fax)

By 
Walter E. Kupper
Registration No.: 34,954
Patent Agent for Applicant

Attachment: 6 drawing sheets